

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are pending.

Claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,014,202 to Van Allen et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,510,722 to Ching et al. and U.S. Patent No. 4,306,442 to Schrock.

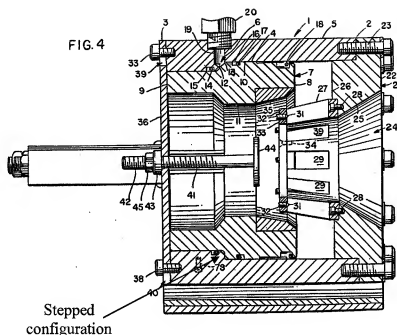
Response to Rejections

Van Allen discloses a conventional swage press comprising a peripheral side wall 5, a front face plate 22, a rear stop plate 36, an internal tubular piston 7, a die holder 27 with radial die passages 29, and crimping dies 30 that are radially movable within the radial die passages 29. The piston 7 is axially moved by application of hydraulic fluid and urges the crimping dies 30 radially inwardly. The front face plate 21 is separate from the peripheral side wall 5 and is secured thereto by fasteners 23. Similarly the rear stop plate 36 is separate from the side wall 5 and is secured thereto by fasteners 33.

The Office Action acknowledged that Van Allen fails to disclose a head assembly for a swage press wherein the front wall is integrally formed with the side wall as in Claims 1 and 2.

Ching was cited as disclosing a radial crimping tool wherein the front wall is integrally formed with the side wall. The Office Action asserted it would have been obvious to modify Van Allen's head assembly to integrally form the front wall and side wall as suggested by Ching.

Applicant respectfully submits that a person of ordinary skill in the art would not have been led to Ching to form Van Allen's side wall 5 and front wall 21 integrally with each other. One reason why such a modification would not have been made is that Van Allen's side wall 5 has a stepped inner surface, and the piston 7 similarly has a stepped configuration, as seen in Figure 4:



Because of this stepped configuration, the piston 7 must be inserted into the housing from the right side of the side wall 5 in Figure 4. The piston 7 cannot be inserted into the housing from the left side in Figure 4 because the larger-diameter portion of the piston 7 is larger in diameter than the smaller-diameter portion of the stepped inner surface of the side wall 5. Once the piston 7 is inserted into the housing, the front plate 21 is fastened to the side wall 5 to capture the piston 7 within the housing. If the front plate 21 were integral with the side wall 5, it would be impossible to insert the piston 7 into the housing. For at least this reason, the proposed modification of Van Allen based on Ching would not have been made.

A second reason why the proposed modification would not have been made is that Ching relates to a very different type of device and application from those with which Van Allen is concerned. Ching discloses an apparatus intended to be used in a medical situation for crimping a stent onto an inflation balloon of a stent delivery catheter. The apparatus has an inner hub 12 with a rear wall (cylindrical disk portion 26) and a plurality of slide blocks 28 defining radial guide rails 34 each supporting a respective crimping jaw 16. Each crimping jaw 16 has an inclined bearing surface 26. The device further includes an outer hub 14 with a "front" wall and a peripheral side wall. The side wall has an internal screw thread adjacent its end distant from

the front wall, which threadingly engages a thread formation on the cylindrical disk portion 26 of the inner hub 12. An internal bearing face 54 is provided on the outer hub adjacent the intersection between the front wall and the peripheral side wall of the outer hub 14. The outer hub 14 further includes a radially extending handle 58 extending outwardly therefrom to allow an operator to grip the handle and rotate the outer hub 14 relative to the inner hub 12, thereby moving the outer hub 14 axially on the thread connections 30, 56 relative to the inner hub 12. This causes the bearing surfaces 36 on the crimping jaws 16 to move along the bearing face 54 and move radially inwardly to crimp the stent 24 onto the inflation balloon 22. This is done so that the stent will have a reduced diameter to permit it to be inserted through an insertion catheter. Once the stent is in place at a lesion site in an artery, the balloon is inflated to expand the stent to essentially its original diameter.

Thus, Ching's objective is to only *temporarily* reduce the diameter of the stent, and such reduction must be *reversible*.

Applicant submits that it would not have been considered logical to modify Van Allen's swage press based on anything taught by Ching. Ching's objective of temporarily and reversibly reducing the diameter of a medical stent is entirely different from Van Allen's objective of permanently and irreversibly crimping a fitting onto a hose or the like. A person concerned with solving a problem in a swage press such as Van Allen's would not have consulted Ching's medical stent-crimping device.

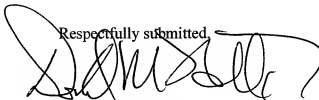
For these reasons, Applicant submits that Van Allen's swage press would not have been modified in the manner asserted in the Office Action. Accordingly, the rejections based on Van Allen in combination with Ching (Claim 1) and in further combination with Schrock (Claim 2) are erroneous, and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Therefore, all pending claims are patentable over the cited references.

Conclusion

Based on the above remarks, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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